

Sutter National Wildlife Refuge Water Conveyance Restoration Project

Ducks Unlimited, Inc.



Construction of the first of six water control structures that improve water supply reliability and flow at the Sutter National Wildlife Refuge.

Purpose

Increase the capacity of the existing water conveyance system of the Sutter National Wildlife Refuge to provide the highest quality habitat for wildlife and fish populations.

Project Goals

- Provide adequate water control to improve wetland management capability.
- Improve water supply reliability and flow.
- Restore the existing 5-mile-long water conveyance system.
- Replace or remove 40 water control structures.
- Stabilize and revegetate levees and other improvements.

Award Amount

\$521,250

Watershed

Sacramento River Watershed

County

Sutter County

CALFED Region

Sacramento Valley Region

Legislative Districts

US Congress: 2

State Assembly: 2

State Senate: 4

Benefits to the CALFED Program

Much of California's wetlands have been lost to urban development and conversion to agricultural uses. This project provides direct ecosystem benefits by maintaining high quality habitat for wildlife by improving the supply and management of water on the Sutter National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is part of the Lower Butte Creek system, identified by the Ecosystem Restoration Program as part of the Butte Basin Ecological Management Zone. This project includes improvements to better maintain and manage more than 1,600 acres of permanent and seasonal wetlands to support bird populations. Anadromous fish populations also benefit from the reliable flows that result from this project. Water quality improvements are achieved by stabilizing and revegetating levees to reduce siltation into the Bay-Delta system.

Project Overview

The 2,291-acre Sutter National Wildlife Refuge was established as part of a complex of refuges to provide habitat for migratory birds, particularly wintering species and those native to the Sacramento Valley. It is also intended to attract the migratory birds away from unharvested crops to minimize depredation. It is important that the refuge be managed to provide the highest quality habitat possible for wildlife and fish populations. The existing water conveyance system within the Sutter National Wildlife Refuge had reached a state of dilapidation to the point of marginal operation. Prior to this project, the water conveyance system was unable to meet essential management objectives that include:

- providing adequate water control for productive wetland management;
- enhancing ability to adaptively manage habitat to address resource needs;
- controlling and circulating adequate quantities of water to aid in the prevention or control of avian botulism and other disease outbreaks; and
- excluding endangered fish species from unsuitable habitats outside of flood events.

This project is restoring the existing 5-mile water conveyance system, replacing and removing water control structures, stabilizing and revegetating levees, and making additional improvements to enhance water use efficiency. It increases the water delivery capacity on the refuge and distributes greater flows to maintain wetland and other habitat and water quality improvements.



With Water Control Structure #6 near completion, water is turned into the system to supply wetlands with a drink.

Contact Information

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